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ABSTRACT

Research and descriptive studies of the active reader (one who starts reading early in life with a broad range of interests and continues this behavior) are of particular interest, because they identify salient characteristics and acquired traits of people who like to read. For example, the mature reader has been characterized as being able to classify, make inferences from statements given in the text, and adapt a reading style and speed to the nature of the text and to the reader's purpose. Among the traits identified for the gifted reader are the following: enjoys reading, is an avid reader, reads widely, learned to read early, is a self-taught reader, reads more and better books than age peers, reads above grade level by at least two years, selects difficult books for reading, and enjoys information books. On the topic of personality characteristics concerning poor and good readers, it has been reported that poor readers are socially naive and less serious; they are also less exacting and more lax. Active readers are known to have greater depth of emotional resources. Studies of so-called adult, active readers repeat many of the characteristics found among preschool, fluent readers. For reading and study skills teachers, a knowledge of these characteristics and the related research studies may be an aid in providing prompt remedial strategies. Teachers are also in a better position to evaluate their students and to provide helpful techniques when they know and understand developmental factors. (HOD)

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What Does the Research Literature Say About Active Readers?

by

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NORTH CENTRAL READING ASSOCIATION

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What Does the Research Literature Say About Active Readers?

Abstract

This paper attempts to identify significant characteristics of the active reader. Active readers are defined as those individuals who usually start reading early in life and continue this behavior throughout their years. They read frequently and have a broad range of interests. Some information is presented regarding personality characteristics and reading preferences. Also mentioned are outcomes of reading. Most of this information comes from research studies within the scholarly literature.

What Does The Research Literature Say About Active Readers?

About 50 years ago (April 6, 1933) William Lyon Phelps, an American educator and author, made a radio broadcast on the topic of "Owning Books". Phelps opened the broadcast with these heavy words, "The habit of reading is one of the greatest resources of mankind...Literature is the immortal part of history; it is the best and most enduring part of personality."[1]

Being able to read is indeed a valued skill. It has been suggested that as people learn to use reading their lives are powerfully yet subtly shaped. David Bloome views this as a social process and claims it allows us to ask a broad range of questions about the role of reading in shaping people's lives.[2] Reading can be a most significant factor in the lives of many people. Nancy Jolly expressed this thought by saying, "What we read shapes our expectations and our actions; reality -- what we experience determines our choice of reading matter."[3]

In the dedication to W. H. Auden's collection of essays, The Dyer's Hand,[4] Auden paid tribute to --

Three grateful memories:

a home full of books
a childhood spent in
country provinces
a tutor in whom one
could confide.

Perhaps Auden's early exposure to books stimulated his literary career.

A lack of books or not being able to read can be a serious handicap. It has been reported that: 60% of the prison population in this country cannot read; 40% of the welfare recipients cannot read; 50% of the unemployed are illiterates, and 28% of high school dropouts cannot read.[5]

Another way to look at this problem is to compare and study traits in specific areas of the country. In the 1983 edition of The Condition of Education, Minnesota is identified as the state with the highest percentage (85%) of high school graduates as a percent of age group. The District of Columbia is lowest with a percentage of 57%.[6] Washington, D.C. also has 7% more crime reported per 100,000 inhabitants than does the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.[7] Additionally Washington, D.C. has 246 parolees per 100,000 inhabitants and Minnesota has 39 parolees per 100,000.[8] Educational level and the ability to read in particular may help to explain many problems within our society.

Walter J. Slatoff has taken the extreme position that, "We know almost nothing about the process of reading and the interaction of man and book."[9] This may be so, but an examination of reading patterns, early learning characteristics, and environments does provide valuable information for reading and study skills professionals. An understanding of this research often provides clues or explanations of what has happened and what should be done to help students.

What Is An Active Reader?

Research and descriptive studies of the active reader (i.e.,

one who starts reading early in life with a broad range of interests and continues this behavior) are of particular interest, because they identify salient characteristics and acquired traits of people who like to read. This information can be useful to professional reading and study skills teachers. A diagnosis of and a prognosis for poor readers might be strengthened with reference to characteristics of active readers.

The term "active reader" might be synonymous with numerous other identifications. Professional literature makes reference to: mature readers, efficient readers, gifted readers, prolific readers, avid readers, fluent readers, good readers, eager readers, superior readers, and high readers. All of these terms refer to individuals who usually start reading early in life and continue this behavior throughout their years. There are many technical variations within each definition.

Eleanor Gibson and Harry Levin characterize the mature reader as being able to: classify (semantic grouping); make inferences from statements given in the text; and adapt a reading style and speed to the nature of the text and to the reader's purpose.[10] George Spache and Paul C. Berg have emphasized the mark of an efficient reader as flexibility in reading methods and reading speeds.[11] In the 1950s Herbert A. Carroll said, "...intelligence quotients of 130 and above -- the 1 percent of the population, are called 'intellectually gifted'."[12] Patricia H. Duncan with a rather stark observation said, "Less well-educated individuals are judged to be reluctant readers."[13] It is true that college graduates not only acquire new knowledge, skills, and interests, they

also use printed media (newspapers, magazines and books) more than nongraduates.[14]

Research Studies

Some of the first research studies involving active readers at an early age were accomplished while studying the concept of reading readiness. In the early 1900s children started first grade at age six. A chronological age of six was the criterion for starting reading, and it was not without some severe critics.[15] John Dewey was one of the most influential critics. Dewey characterized school instruction in reading as passive and mechanical.[16]

The educational literature of the 1920s contains numerous research studies citing the correlation between intelligence and reading achievement of first grade children. Reading readiness tests flourished from the 1920s into the 1930s. In 1937 Authur I. Gates said, "Reading is begun by very different materials, methods, and general procedures, some of which a pupil can master at the mental age of five with reasonable ease, others of which would give him difficulty at the mental age of seven."[17]

Into the 1950s reading professionals gave considerable attention to maturation, mental age, and readiness testing. "Too often overlooked was the possibility that changes in instruction might affect a child's readiness to begin to read."[18] Helen P. Davidson completed a study in 1931 of 13 children each with a mental age of four years. Davidson wanted to find out if children with a mental age of only four years could learn to read. Results indicated that all the children had learned to read some words. Davidson concluded early training in reading is not injurious to children.[19]

Investigations of gifted children, those whose tested IQ are somewhere around 120 or better, indicate they are active readers and prime candidates for research studies. Lewis M. Terman's research with gifted children in the 1920s mentions that 250 of his 552 subjects reported having learned to read before starting school. Of these, 113 said they learned to read before the age of five; 34 learned to read before they were four, and 9, before they were three.[20] In 1954 Ruth Strang's research found that about half of the 54 junior high school students who had IQs of 120 or higher learned to read when they were five years old or younger.[21] Lawrence M. Kasdon reported on 50 superior readers among college freshman and found that 27 claimed to be reading before entering the first grade. Of the remaining 23 subjects, 14 learned to read during first grade.[22]

In 1969 Florence Schale presented a paper to the North Central Reading Association titled "Gifted Rapid Readers."[23] She observed that one student out of 100 or one percent of the trained population is a gifted, rapid reader (i.e., can maintain 70 percent or above comprehension at rates above 20,000 words per minute). Schale found these characteristics in the gifted, rapid readers:

1) superior ability to recall most of what was read
2) highly developed eidetic memory (i.e., a memory that produces visual images having almost photographic accuracy)
3) strong dominance traits
4) excellent eyesight
5) encouraging environment at home from a parent or relative.[24]

Walter B. Barbe published an article titled "Characteristics of Gifted Children" in 1955 which was a review of literature.[25] Barbe found these characteristics to be important:

1) Gifted children show on the average a high level of physical development, health, mental and social adjustment.
2) There is early development of self-criticism, initiative, and independence in thinking, ability to see relationships, make associations, adapt abstract principals to concrete situations, and observe and remember details.
3) Gifted children have a high degree of general intelligence.
4) Follow-up studies have shown gifted children maintain their superiority throughout life.
5) Nearly half of the gifted children identified in one study (Terman & Oden) learned to read before starting to school.[26]
6) Gifted children read easily, read more and better books than the average child.
7) Gifted children read more science, history, biography, travel books, folk tales, informational fiction, poetry, and drama and proportionately fewer books of adventure or mystery and far less emotional fiction.[27]

In a recent book by Virginia Z. Ehrlich (1982) a checklist of traits is provided to compare gifted students with their peers.[28]

This checklist identifies these traits for the gifted:

1) enjoys reading
2) is an avid reader
3) reads widely
4) learned to read early
5) is self-taught reader
6) reads more and better books than age peers
7) reads above grade level by at least two years
8) selects difficult books for reading
9) enjoys information books such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, atlases, and biographies.[29]

Ehrlich has identified a total of 46 traits in which the gifted excel when compared to their age peers. These are: vocabulary, verbal facility, reading, writing, memory, learning, thinking, flexibility of thought, abstract reasoning, symbolic thought, generalization -- insight, complexity, planning and organization, creativity and imagination, originality, curiosity, sense of wonder, range of information, range of interests, aesthetic interests and/or talents, attention to detail, outstanding performance, scholastic achievement, leadership, attention and concentration, persistence, self-criticism, responsiveness, strength of character, candidness, dependability, social responsibility, cooperation, common sense, sensitivity, popularity, enthusiasm, sense of humor, spatial relationships, emotional stability, self-sufficiency and self-confidence, health, energy, early development, comparison with siblings and others, and preference for older playmates.[30]

Eunice H. Price published a most interesting, brief study in

1976 titled "How Thirty-Seven Gifted Children Learned to Read."[31] Of the 37 gifted children studied, 28 (76 percent) were reading when they entered first grade. One father said he taught his daughter to read using a combination of phonics and sight words. Another parent reported the child was taught to read at age three because of the high interest shown by the child. When one mother noticed that her child was reading names of products on TV without seeing the products, the mother and grandmother then taught the child to read at age three and a half.[32]

Price found these characteristics:

1) Thirty-four of the 37 parents started reading to their children from birth or when they were able to sit up.
2) Mothers were listed most (36 times) in answer to the question, "Who read to them?" However, 23 answers listed father in addition to mother.
3) The majority of these children walked and talked early.
4) Parents of these gifted children noticed active imaginations, curiosity, and problem-solving capacity during early development.[33]

The last sentence in Price's article states, "Reading to a child at an early age can provide opportunity for children's own intelligence to go to work on reading."[34]

In 1961 Dolores Durkin published a descriptive study of 49 first grade children who learned to read before grade one.[35] The factors that Durkin identified as being most relevent in early learning are:

1) The children had exceptionally good memories and the ability to concentrate.
2) A majority of the children were described as curious, conscientious, serious minded, persistent, and self-reliant.
3) All children had been read to regularly at home. In some instances this reading began at age two.
4) In all 49 families there was at least one person who took time and had the patience to answer the child's questions about words and about reading.[36] Most of the parents said the questioning was constant.

In this study over one-third of the children had IQs of less than 110, indicating that important intellectual factors or abilities are not always included in intelligence quotients.[37]

In 1976 James R. Evans and Linda Jones Smith reported on superior readers in preschool and kindergarten.[38] Nineteen children between the ages of four years, nine months and six years, five months were studied. "Of all the skills areas measured, only sound blending and visual memory for letters were superior in all these children."[39] Evans and Jones speculated that skills such as sound blending and visual memory for letters are developed by, or concurrently with, the reading skill.

In 1977 Chari Briggs and David Elkind published an article titled "Characteristics of Early Readers" which was based on parental interview data.[40] Thirty-three early readers (before kindergarten) and 33 matched, control children were given a battery of tests, and

their parents were interviewed on 47 items dealing with demography, parenting practices, and child characteristics. Testing revealed that early readers were superior to non-readers on Auditory Closure and Sound Blending. Early readers also gave superior performances on the creativity test. Perhaps early reading requires a certain openness and flexibility with respect to relationships between words and their meaning.[41]

From interview data Briggs and Elkind found:

1) Parential achievement motivation was related to early reading.
2) Parents of early readers took their children to the library more often, read to their children at an early age, and created a language rich environment for them.
3) Parents rather than children's interest may be the main motivational determinant of early reading.[42]

Briggs and Elkind concluded that a relatively small proportion of children (about one to three in a hundred) read before first grade.

Ruth L. Gottesman, Lila Croen, and Laurence Rotkin have examined good and poor readers in an urban second grade.[43] From their review of literature, they identify four factors that might contribute to poor reading:

1) adverse pregnancy and birth factors
2) lack of stimulation in language and congitive areas
3) low educational level of mothers
4) less than adequate school environment.[44]

Gottesman, et al. believe it is difficult to know if poor readers at an early age are truly deficient in abilities related to reading. They may be showing a delay in some aspect of intellectual development and will in time catch up with their peers. However, intervention at a primary-grade level may significantly enhance reading achievement throughout their lives.[45]

This spring (1984) Keith E. Stanovich, Anne E. Cunningham, and Dorothy J. Feeman published a fine scholarly article with an excellent review of literature. Their article is titled "Intelligence, Cognitive Skills, and Early Reading Progress."[46] Fifty-six first grade children were administered measures of general intelligence, decoding speed, phonological awareness, and listening comprehension. Decoding speed accounted for the largest amount of variance. But the notion that reading is strongly related to general intelligence once differences in decoding ability have been accounted for was not supported.[47]

Some findings from the Stanovich, et al. article are:

1) Decoding speed is relatively independent of general intelligence and listening comprehension for first grade children.
2) It appears that an understanding of early reading progress will not be enhanced by substituting notions of general intelligence for a process analysis of individual differences in reading ability.
3) While reading is dependent on listening comprehension ability at all ages, this relationship becomes

stronger at the higher levels of reading skill.

4) Inadequate decoding skills result in unrewarding early reading experiences that lead to less involvement in reading-related activities.
5) The speed of early reading acquisition is substantially correlated with reading performance later in life.
6) Single-factor theories of reading failure are rejected and multiple-cause theories are supported.
7) In the first grade general intelligence was not a strong predicator of reading comprehension.
8) The correlation between reading comprehension and general intelligence increases with age.[48]

One particularly good follow-up study of young readers has been conducted by Mary Evalyn Howden.[49] This study by Howden is titled "A Nineteen-Year Follow-Up Study of Good, Average and Poor Readers In The Fifth and Sixth Grades". Howden investigated the reading characteristics of adults in a nineteen-year follow-up study sampling a group of 338 fifth and sixth grade children tested in 1948, at an Oregon public school system.[50]

These conclusions and findings came from Howden's study:

1) Preference for reading as a leisure activity, the reading of books, and leisure time investment in reading are positively related to adult reading skill.
2) Good readers are somewhat more likely to exercise their voting franchise as adults than are average

and poor readers.

3) Reading skill and reading time investment tend to increase with social status.

4) Parental social class appears to be positively related both to childhood and to adult reading.

5) The amount of parental reading as recalled by adult subjects is positively related to adult reading test scores.

6) Adults who remember their parents as having read much in books, magazines, and newspapers tend to be average or good readers themselves. This effect is less striking at the other extreme, for adults remembering their parents as having read little or nothing.

7) No sex differences noted except in reading achievement. Males appear to outnumber females at the lower extremes of adult reading achievement as measured by the Gates Reading Survey. David P. Ausubel has explained this type of finding by identifying a sex bias. Girls receive much more approval and considerably less scolding from teachers than boys. "It is not at all surprising, therefore, that boys furnish a disproportionate share of non-readers, the underachievers, the truants, the behavior problems, the inattentive, and the dropouts".[51]

8) When reading subskills as measured by the Gates

Reading Survey are considered, children who are poor readers in the fifth and sixth grades tend to be stronger in vocabulary than in comprehension, as a group. Those who remain poor readers as adults are likely to reverse this relationship, so that the comprehension score is higher than the vocabulary score.

9) Even in a geographical setting where the majority of employment opportunities make little demand on literacy, poor reading ability is still regarded as a hindrance to economic advancement and as a pitfall in social situations.
10) For most of those adults, near thirty years of age, their future as readers was already predictable by the time they were in the fifth or sixth grade.
11) If achievement patterns which will carry into adult life are already clearly formed for most children by fifth or sixth grade, the years of life prior to this seem crucial.
12) The attempt to teach reading remains a most powerful tool.
13) All of the identified good readers (nine) were either firstborn or only children.[52]

Another good study involving what Margaret M. Clark calls fluent readers was started in 1969.[53] Thirty-two children who were already reading fluently and with understanding when they started school at approximately five years of age formed the basis

of the study. An intensive detailed analysis of these young fluent readers was made. This study was accomplished in Dunbartonshire, Glasgow, and Stirlingshire, Scotland.

These observations were made by Clark:

1) It is important to consider not only the extent to which the child is ready for school but also the extent to which the teacher is ready to receive the child on the level at which he is functioning.
2) Reading to children not only anticipates the reading instruction but also is part of the process of learning the characteristics of written language and, therefore, an integral part of the reading instruction. The more the child has become sensitized to the structure of written language, the more likely he is to make the appropriate anticipations when reading himself.
3) The early reading of boys was more likely to be associated with their other specific interests, while the girls aimed at extending their reading of fictional stories.
4) Reading to children, especially where this involves frequent repetition of the same stories, may well lead to improved ability to predict ones way through print by anticipating the correct word or possible correct words.

5) None of the mothers were under 20 at the time of birth, and 15 were over 30 years of age. The warmth of interest shown by these mothers in their children's development was quite remarkable. This may be related, among other things, to their age at the time of birth.

6) The mothers all expressed interest in their child's progress and found the children stimulating companions. Few had worked even part-time while their children were of pre-school age; nor had they sent their children either to a nursery school or play group.

7) Left-handedness or slow development of dominant handedness is frequently quoted as a significant feature in children who later develop reading or language difficulties. One of the boys of mixed handedness had shown some reading difficulties. His mother reported high blood pressure during pregnancy. She had an earlier history of frequent miscarriages. The child suffered from a concussion at an early age.

8) Half of the children were already making use of the public library. The local library was a crucial source of reading material for these children even at this early age.

9) These young fluent readers were very self-sufficient children.

10) When their precocious reading habits were coupled with a high level of intelligence and general knowledge well beyond their years, these children were a challenge to their teachers.

11) These children were average or below average in motor co-ordination. Most were only average in art, handwork, physical education, and games.

12) Mothers encouraged independence and found time to read to their children, talk to them, and listen to them.

13) While interviewing mothers, the value of a sense of humor and of fun was mentioned repeatedly.

14) It became increasingly clear that in most of the homes both parents played a crucial role in their children's intellectual development.

15) The most significant characteristics of these children are concentration and self-sufficiency.

16) Most of the fluent readers had available during pre-school an interested adult who talked and listened to them.

17) For all children, books formed a fascinating part of their life, and shared experience.[54]

Personality characteristics of poor readers (with the ultimate objective of determining an effective remedial treatment) was studied by Authur Gates and published in 1941. This became one of his most famous reviews.[55] Gates concluded that personality maladjustment is frequently found to coexist with reading disability.

He said, "My estimate is that among cases of very marked specific reading disability, about 75 percent will show personality maladjustment."[56]

On the topic of personality characteristics concerning good and poor readers, it has been reported that poor readers are socially naive and less serious; they are also less exacting and more lax. Good male readers have been identified as more intelligent; they have more self-sentiment, are more careful and shy, and more independent than poor male readers. Good female readers tend to be more critical and precise; they are more emotionally stable, less anxious, and more independent than poor female readers.[57]

In regard to test anxious readers in college, David Wark has found evidence that students who are unconcerned about test panic seem to be taking in their environment.[58] They focus on words and thoughts. Test-anxious students seem to be rejecting the text. Wark said, "The mode of responding may have to do with their feelings and discomfort, rather than the material they are reading".[59] This suggests that reading, even for bright, college level students, is subject to psychological variables that have nothing to do with the ability to read. Active readers may show up as mediocre students for reasons associated with poor utilization of their acquired skills.

In a most interesting but quite complex volume, Norman W. Holland presents evidence indicating the most skilled readers can diverge markedly in their interpretations of widely accepted classics.[60] Holland starts his book with a quote from William Blake:

Both read the Bible day and night,
But thou read'st black where I read
white.[61]

Holland believes it is possible to see how each reader creates from the literary work a psychological process in herself or himself. He says, "All readings originate in the reader's personality -- all are 'subjective' in that sense...a reader responds to a literary work by using it to re-create his own characteristic psychological process."[62] Marcel Proust has put it this way, "In reality, each reader reads only what is already within himself. The book is only a sort of optional instrument which the writer offers to the reader to enable the latter to discover in himself what he would not have found but for the aid of the book."[63]

Indeed, reading does something to a reader and a number of studies have tried to measure these feelings by: hormone concentrations, heart rate, fidget frequency, and galvanic skin reactions.[64] Perhaps, active readers compared to nonreaders are in better control of their emotions as well as being in strict control of their reading material. Active readers may have learned in some way or another that too much emotional involvement is debilitating. They also may have a greater depth of emotional resources.

Studies of so-called adult, active readers repeat many of the characteristics found among pre-school, fluent readers. Patricia H. Duncan and William F. Goggin found these characteristics emerging after interviewing 21 retired adults who were active, lifelong readers:

1) Active, retired, adult readers started reading early in life with the support and guidance of family members.
2) Good readers were aware of literary resources and continued to enjoy similar types of reading materials throughout their lives.
3) Adult readers added new types of reading materials as environmental influences changed and discarded materials when they were no longer relevant.
4) For these people, reading was personal.
5) They were articulate, alert, and mentally active.
6) The readers maintained a sense of humor and had other interests to complement their reading.[65]

Ronald A. Jobe found similar characteristics while doing a survey of adult, active readers. They learned to read before starting school and were influenced by parents who read to them. Their parents read for enjoyment and owned many books.[66] Jobe also makes the point that teachers must be enthusiastic readers.

In a study of 101 older adults, Kathleen M. Ngandu found:

1) A wide range of reading interests, including mysteries, biographies, and histories.
2) Frequent use of library facilities with 74% citing libraries as their main source of reading materials.
3) Reading activities occupied 2.5 hours of an average day, while their television viewing time averaged 2.4 hours.

4) Their greatest motivations for reading were enjoyment and gathering information.[67]

Studying characteristics of older readers might be a predictable, circular process. Educational level appears to determine the amount, type, and variety of reading materials consumed, and longevity is significantly correlated to educational level.[68] Those with a higher educational level live longer. So a study of older adults should be over-represented with active readers.

A study of prominent individuals who read frequently and diligently provides some evidence to sustain characteristics found through research. This also seems to hold true in cross-cultural examinations. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi said he was only a mediocre student when he started school.[69] He was shy and avoided all company. This shyness extended into his early career. Gandhi's home life was cultured with books in the house. "My books and my lessons were my sole companions," said Gandhi.[70] Indeed Gandhi was quite thoughtful, and he had a strong supportive mother: "The outstanding impressions my mother has left on my memory is that of saintliness. She was deeply religious."[71]

It may be that an appropriate religious influence can significantly structure a helpful and supportive climate for the potential active reader. In Gandhi's case, religion did not interfere with his strong political views, and his political views did not infringe on his religious observance. He was <u>not</u> trying to convert the British to Hinduism; he simply wanted political independence for his country.

Albert Schweitzer was a profound Christian all of his life and

an excellent example of talent mobilized for the needs of humanity.[72] As a philosopher, theologian, musician, and medical missionary, he remains a distinctive role model for all of us. Schweitzer got music lessons from his father at age five, but was a poor scholar in his early years at the Gymnasium.[73]

For Charles de Gaulle his home was a primary influence throughout his formative years.[74] De Gaulle's father was one of the most eminent teachers in Paris, and he added education to every family activity. The de Gaulles were a loving and united family. Charles de Gaulle was a voracious reader with a remarkable memory, a gift that he seemed to inherit from his father and retained throughout his life. "He devoured newspapers and novels as well as the standard classics in French, Latin and Greek."[75]

Reading newspapers in a thorough and complete fashion was a lifelong habit for Mao Tse-tung. Mao was raised gently, but clashed with his father. This seemed to establish a strong sense of justice which made him burn with fury at times.[76] Mao's mother "...was plump and kind-eyed, a contrast to her thin, sharp husband, and she was as soft and accommodating as he was harsh and driven."[77] Mao Tse-tung loved to read. As a student, he tracked down every book available within his rural area of Music Mountain in Hunan Provance.

Active readers may be more likely to develop perspectives that relate to thoughtfulness and purpose. They may also be more committed and resolute.

Summary

A primary factor in the development of active readers seems to be family influence with special emphasis on supportive strategies for reading. Independence training with a mixture of freedom and

structure appears to be critical but also illusive. The right mixture is always a fine spun combination of certain parential judgments.

For reading and study skills teachers, a knowledge of these active reader characteristics and the related research studies might be useful in many ways. Knowing and understanding a student's background, supplemented with research knowledge, may be an aid in providing prompt remedial strategies. Many students need considerable support and understanding from teachers at all levels to overcome intellectual handicaps inherited from their home.

Teachers are always in a better position to evaluate their students and provide helpful techniques when they know and understand developmental factors. What we know about our students can be translated and used to provide appropriate learning climates.

Learning from the research data helps to generate ideas, and it keeps us in focus with our student clients. As scholars we are entrusted to develop intellectual resources as best we can. This requires skill, knowledge, diligence, and considerable patience. Our own growth as professionals will determine to a significant degree our effectiveness as reading and study skills specialists.

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